

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, AO

SUBJECT: PRAVDA COMMENTS ON ANGOLA

REF. MOSCOW 18458, B. MOSCOW 17424 (NOTAL)

1. PRAVDA (JANUARY 3) CARRIES AN UNSIGNED COMMENTARY ON EVENTS
IN ANGOLA; TASS ENGLISH ALSO CARRIES THE TEXT ON THE SAME DAY.

2. IN A CLEAR REFERENCE TO THE "GUILT" OF THE LEADERS OF FNLA
AND UNIT, PRAVDA STATES THAT, AT THE TIME OF ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE,
THE SOVIET UNION WELCOMED A GOVERNMENT COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE VARIOUS FACTIONS, AND IF INTERNAL EVENTS TOOK A DIFFERENT

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TURN, RESPONSIBILITY RESTS WITH THE LEADERS OF THE "SEPARATIST

GROUPS." PRAVDA ADDS THAT A "CONSOLIDATION OF PATRIOTIC AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST FORCES OF ANGOLA" WHICH SUPPORT ITS "INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY" WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED BY EVERYONE "REALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THAT COUNTRY'S DESTINY."

3. ELSEWHERE, PRAVDA DISAVOWS ANY SOVIET DESIRE TO ESTABLISH MILITARY BASES IN ANGOLA, AND CLAIMS THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT SEEKING ANY KIND OF ECONOMIC OR MILITARY ADVANTAGES THROUGH ITS SUPPORT OF "THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA." PRAVDA ALSO SAYS USSR "COMES OUT FIRMLY FOR THE CESSATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION."

4. PRAVDA'S TREATMENT OF THE OAU IS A BIT SOFTER THAN WAS KLIMOV'S (REFTEL A), AS PRAVDA CONCLUDES THAT THE DECISIONS OF THE UPCOMING CONFERENCE "COULD PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE" IN THE VICTORY OF THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE AGAINST THE "ENEMIES OF INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM."

5. COMMENT - AN UNSIGNED COMMENTARY IN PRAVDA CARRIES HIGH AUTHORITY, AND WHILE WE ARE UNABLE AT THIS DISTANCE TO JUDGE THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS ONE, SEVERAL ASPECTS ARE INTRIGUING. IT TIES TOGETHER PREVIOUS STRANDS OF SOVIET PUBLIC PLAY (REFTELS) IN MORE EXPLICIT, AND POSSIBLY NOVEL, FASHION. COMBINED WITH THE POSITIVE CONCLUDING NOD TO THE OAU, THE EXPLICIT CONDEMNATION OF THE LEADERS OF UNITA AND FNLA PICKS UP BOTH KAPSKIY'S DECEMBER 4 CHARGE THAT THEY MAKE OAU EFFORTS FRUITLESS AND KLIMOV'S RATHER ELLIPTICAL DECEMBER 25 STATEMENT THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF UNITY WITH THOSE WHO HAVE ENTERED CRIMINAL ALLIANCE WITH ANTI-NATIONAL INTERESTS. CONCEIVABLY, THIS COULD CONSTITUTE SMALL STEP TOWARD SOVIET RECOGNITION THAT SOME SORT OF COALITION GOVERNMENT -- KLIMOV'S "UNITY OF NATIONAL FORCES" -- MIGHT BE THINKABLE, WITHOUT ROBERTO AND SAVIMBI. IT COULD ALSO BE THAT SOVIETS SIMPLY WISH TO SADDLE OAU WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPLITTING FNLA AND UNITA TROOPS FROM THEIR LEADERS. AT THE LEAST, HOWEVER, IT SHOULD SERVE TO DEFLATE CHARGES THAT SOVIETS ARE HOSTILE IN PRINCIPLE TO OAU WORK ON ANGOLAN SOLUTION.

6. PUBLIC DENIAL OF BASE AMBITIONS IS NEW IN ANGOLAN CONTEXT, BUT IS MOST PROBABLY INTENDED TO REBUT VARIOUS ACCUSATIONS MADE IN THE WEST. THE CALL FOR TERMINATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENTION ALSO SEEMS NEW TO US, BUT WE BELIEVE IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT "FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION" EXTENDS IN SOVIET EYES BEYOND SOUTH AFRICA AND THE WEST TO INCLUDE CUBAN COMRADES. MATLOCK

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